

For immediate release
June 10, 2005

LOWER RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL STUDIES AND LEVEE REHABILITATION PLAN ON AGENDA FOR JUNE 28 PUBLIC MEETING

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has scheduled a public meeting of its Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF) on June 28 at 4:00 p.m. in the Hoblitzelle Auditorium of the Texas A & M Agricultural Research and Extension Center, 2415 E. Highway 83 in Weslaco, Texas. The purpose of the LRGCF is to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

USIBWC Lead Civil Engineer Steven J. Smullen will present the latest studies and plans related to proposed improvements to the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project. In 2004, the USIBWC updated hydraulic models for federal flood control projects along the border, including the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project. More recently, the agency completed a hydrology study of Mexico's San Juan River basin, a major tributary to the Lower Rio Grande. The purpose of these studies was to document changes in the floodplain and river basins that have taken place in the past 35 years and to determine the effect those changes have on flood flows. In 2004, the USIBWC and the U.S. Army Research and Development Center completed an integrated condition assessment of USIBWC levees and their foundations in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The purpose of this assessment was to detect unstable levee reaches that require repair or replacement and to develop an overall rehabilitation plan for the area. In the past year, the products of these two efforts have been synthesized to develop an overall plan for improvements to the Rio Grande levee system and to restore the level of flood

protection to its original condition. This presentation will provide an overview of the modeling, assessment, and proposed rehabilitation plan for levee improvements.

In other agenda items, USIBWC Secretary Carlos Rivera will provide an update on the status of Mexican water deliveries. In accordance with the 1944 Water Treaty, Mexico is to provide water to the United States from its Rio Grande tributaries. Since 1992, Mexico has accumulated a deficit in those deliveries. In March, the United States and Mexico announced that Mexico would pay its Rio Grande water debt by September 2005. Mexico has already delivered sufficient water to reduce the debt to 208,000 acre-feet and United States storage at Amistad and Falcon International Reservoirs is at 98% capacity.

Rivera will also discuss the Binational Rio Grande Summit planned for September 2005 in McAllen, Texas-Reynosa, Tamaulipas, sponsored by the International Boundary and Water Commission. The purpose of the Summit is to convene experts and water users from both countries to provide information concerning sustainable management of the Rio Grande basin. The International Boundary and Water Commission intends to use this information in development of a binational sustainable management plan for the basin.

A complete meeting agenda appears below. Members of the public who would like more information can contact the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Project Office at 956-565-3150 or Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener at sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM

Tuesday, June 28, 2005

4:00 - 6:00 P.M.

Hoblitzelle Auditorium

Texas A & M Agricultural Research and Extension Center

2415 E. Highway 83

Weslaco, Texas

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction of New Board Members - Rick Reyes, Co-Chair, USIBWC
- Flood Control Studies and Rehabilitation Plan for USIBWC Rio Grande and Interior Floodway Levees - Steven J. Smullen, Lead Civil Engineer, USIBWC
- Update on Planning for Binational Rio Grande Summit - Carlos Rivera, Secretary, USIBWC
- Update on Payment of Mexico's Rio Grande Water Debt - Carlos Rivera, Secretary, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Member Orientation - Sally Spener, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer
- Board Discussion, Suggested Future Agenda Items

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time.

For more information, call 956-565-3150 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.